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Berlin: Soviets say East Germans would stop harassing if Bonn cut back its Berlin ties. (Page 4)

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Berlin: [The Soviets say that East German restrictions on the access of West Germans to Berlin could be lifted if Bonn pledged to cut back sharply its ties with West Berlin.]

[The USSR's ambassador in East Berlin, Abrasimov, told US Ambassador McGhee on 3 May that the ban on travel of senior West German officials to and from Berlin "can be annulled" by the East German regime. This would come about, he suggested, if Bonn publicly renounced holding Bundestag committee meetings in Berlin and abandoned other "measures intending to show that West Berlin belongs to the Federal Republic."]

[Abrasimov said nothing about canceling the East German ban on travel of "neofascists" such as members of the right-wing National Democratic Party (NPD). He said merely that the US should not take the ban "so seriously," since only a small number of NPD members had been affected so far.]

[During the two-and-a-half hour meeting, which centered on access matters, the Russian diplomat pressed for US efforts to have Bonn stop demonstrating its links with Berlin. He emphasized that no obstacle to Allied access had been created. The Soviet envoy seemed instead at pains to indicate that the USSR wanted no open confrontation with the Allies. His primary preoccupation seemed to be an avowed determination to avoid increased tension in Berlin.]

[Abrasimov made a vague reference to possible additional measures if Bonn officials continued to come to West Berlin by air, saying, "We have the means, but we are not anxious to employ them."]

[The Soviet ambassador also indicated that the travel restrictions were limited in application. He claimed that the East Germans had exempted West German officials in the economic and cultural fields. He also said that exceptions for West German government ministers were possible only if Bonn would raise the question with the East Germans.]

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